

TO THE

PEOPLE OF SOUTHAMPTON.

LETTER II.

I had not, last week, time to address you fully upon the subject of the treatment you have received at the hands of ROSE; or, rather, on the subject of that conduct, on your part, which has made it *just and proper* that you should have been treated by him in the manner that I need not again describe.

It is perfectly notorious, that, if you have a mind to exert yourselves, you are able to insist upon having, in the House of Commons, two Members *of your own choice*. It is also perfectly notorious, that, for many years past, the elder George Rose, or his son, the younger George Rosé, has been one of your Members. Hence, it is very clear, that, either through your choice, or through your indolence and want of public spirit, these persons have been empowered to give their voice in the making of laws to govern us, in imposing upon us those taxes, and in carrying on that system, under which, at last, we are all plunged into misery which no craft can longer disguise.

You complain, now, that George Rose the elder has abused you in his degrading descriptions of those of you who petitioned against the Income Tax. But, what right have you to make this complaint, any more than a farmer would have a right to complain of the devastation in his hen-roost by a fox which he himself had let into the habitation of his poultry? "Curse the Cat!" exclaimed my cook, the other day, when she herself had shut the poor thing into the pantry. Now, was it not known to you, that the Roses live upon taxes, as well as it is known to a farmer that foxes eat hens, and as well

as it is known to cooks that cats gnaw joints of meat?

It is now nearly twenty years ago that old George Rose published a pamphlet, the main object of which was, to persuade the people of this country, that, unless they continued to pay *heavy taxes*, the French would come and *take away all their property*, and what was a great deal worse, he said, "deprive them of the *blessed comforts of religion*," and make them atheists. The passage, to which I now more particularly allude, was in these words: "It would be a slander to the sense and virtue of the people, to suppose *an abatement of that spirit which has enabled government to call forth those resources*. The prosperous state of the empire, which affords all the power, furnishes all the motive, for continuing the contest; a contest the support of which to a successful issue is *to secure us in the enjoyment of every national advantage*, and to protect us from the *infliction of every national calamity*. The imperious and awful necessity of the present crisis unavoidably subjects us to heavy burdens. It has been said that they ought to be considered as a SALVAGE for the remaining part of our property. In the consideration of property to which it is applied, the figure is sufficiently striking; but, in other respects, the metaphor, though just, is *inadequate*. What Tariff shall settle the difference between *national independence* and *inexorable tyranny*? between *personal liberty* and *requisitions, prisons, and murder*? between the BLESSED COMFORTS OF RELIGION and the gloomy despair of atheism?"

We will not stop to remark on the *impudence* of this, or on the contempt which the brazen pamphleteer must have had for the understandings of the people of this country. But, let us see how George managed this business of "salvage." He

says, the "salvage upon *our* property." What, then, was *his* property, and how did *he* pay salvage? You were to pay salvage; but he did not tell you, that he himself was one of the *receivers* of the said salvage. At the time when he wrote this pamphlet, he and his sons were, as they still are, in the receipt *annually* of public money to the following amount:

Old George Rose, as Treasurer of the Navy,	£ 4,324
Old George Rose, as Clerk of the Parliaments, which is a sinecure, and is for his <i>life</i> , and is granted also for the <i>life</i> of his eldest son, young George Rose, your present Member,	3,278
Old George Rose, as keeper of the Records in the Exchequer, another sinecure place,	400
William Stuart Rose, second son of old George Rose, as Clerk of the Exchequer Pleas, which is also a sinecure place,	2,137
	<hr/> £ 10,139 <hr/>

Such was the annual sum, which the blessed comforts of Religion yielded this man. What wonder that he was so much afraid of atheism? This income, or an income to this amount, out of the public money, these persons have received, I believe, for at least 24 years. How much *more* they may, amongst them, have received, in other ways, I know not. At any rate, here is a sum of *two hundred and forty-three thousand, three hundred and thirty-six pounds of principal money*. If we add the interest, the amount will be nearer *four hundred thousand than three hundred thousand pounds*.

This being very well known to the people of Southampton, and they having, with these facts before them, elected and re-elected the Roses to assist in the making of laws and the imposing of taxes, what

right have they now to complain, that these Roses, these eaters of taxes, do all that they can to prevent any tax from being abolished? But, "Mr. Rose has done many *kind things* for you!" That is to say, he has got so many smaller sums of the public money to be given to some of you in the shape of *offices* and *posts*. This was very *kind* in him, to be sure, and very *honest* in those amongst you who gave their *votes* in exchange.

I was in Southampton once when there seemed to be a great bustle in the town; the people were gayly dressed and flocking down to the water side. "What is going on," said I to a very fine looking young man, who was pushing down the street in haste. "Why," said he, "don't you know, Sir, that this is *Mr. Rose's annual sailing match*?" Upon further inquiry, I found, that he amused the town with a sailing match annually for a prize of 20 or 30 pounds! What a scandalous thing for such a town to be gratified with such a gift from such hands! There is, in this instance of servility, a meanness, a baseness, which I cannot describe. When any portion of the people discover marks of respect, bordering on self-abasement, towards persons of ancient families, whose names have been pronounced with a sort of veneration for ages, it may be, though not commended, excused; but, in a case like this, when all the well-known facts are taken into view, one's foot almost rises involuntarily to kick the base and degenerate crew.

But, the scenes at Winchester have been still more humiliating. I have seen the magistrates, the gentlemen, the baronets, the lords, following this same George Rose up the street and down the street like so many lacquays. I have seen a Grand Jury, having on it several Baronets of ancient family, and one Lord, at least, all in waiting, 'til George Rose came to be their *foreman*! Upon one occasion I saw a whole *possé* of Noblemen and Gentlemen following at his heels down

the street, when he, as if he wished to exhibit them in their true light, went into a shop, and remained there several minutes, and they actually stood waiting 'til he came out, upon which they resumed the order of their march.*

The example, however, of this prostrate herd is no justification for you. You all know your duty. You all know your rights. You all know what this man has been, and what he is; and, if you choose him to represent you, or choose one whom he nominates, to be ground to the earth with taxes is a punishment as mild as you have any reason to expect. To be called *paupers* and *chimney-sweepers* by George Rose is what a *majority* of the

* George Rose (who is a Scotchman) was, during the first American War, a purser in the Navy. After that war was over, he became a clerk in some of the offices, and under the administration of Lord Shelborne, he was a sort of assistant to one of the Secretaries of the Treasury; that is to say, he was employed to do the dirty work; to negotiate with the printers of newspapers to write paragraphs, to hire petty scoundrels, and to do other things which the Secretary himself dared not be seen in. Under Pitt he became a Secretary of the Treasury himself, and, through a series of the most infamous jobbing, he has arrived at his present eminence, being a Member of the king's most honourable Privy Council; having an estate in land of many thousands a year, and having the power of sending three members to Parliament, two for Christ Church, and one for Southampton. Such is the man who is now followed and flattered by English Gentlemen, whose ancestors would no more have associated with him than they would have associated with a common thief. And, shall not a reptile like this, who, by such means, has gorged himself with the public money to the amount of more than two hundred thousand pounds, be made to *disgorge*? Is it to be believed, that the nation will be so unjust as to rob the widow and the orphan, whose sole means of existence are deposited in the funds, while this man is revelling in the riches which have been derived from taxes and from loans?

people of Southampton merit at *his* hands. Paupers and Chimneysweepers are, indeed, infinitely more worthy of respect than the men who have been the upholders of the Roses, considering the motives from which they have acted. And, of late years, it is in vain to say that they have been *deceived*. Twenty years ago they might. But, at this day there is not a man in the whole kingdom, who can be ignorant of how he ought to feel and act towards such a man as George Rose.

We shall see whether you are now to be *kicked into courage*; we shall see whether you will re-elect a person of his pointing out: I say, we shall *see* this; for, if I have life and health 'til the next election, he, or his son, be it which it may, shall, if he offers himself, have *me* for an opponent; and, if you re-elect him, you shall not, at any rate, have ignorance to plead in your defence.

This is not, you will say, a very *flattering* electioneering address. These are not the times for flattery. We have been brought into a state of misery that no nation ever before experienced. Nothing but great public spirit and resolution can extricate us from it. The palaver of courtiers and the cant of selfishness only tend to utter ruin. It is not "*mild, moderate, inoffensive*" men that we want. Let those who are willing to be reduced to the state of Pauperism, indulge their partiality for inefficient men whom they like because they resemble themselves; but, let all those who wish to make their voice heard and attended to, choose men who are able to be the interpreters of their wishes. The hunk who prates about moderation, and exclaims against *violent men*, because he thinks that justice to the people at large might place his masses or wealth in some degree of jeopardy, will find, if he live only a few years, that his cant will be of no avail. He will find, that a radical reformation must come, and that ninety-nine of his neighbours will not live in misery, lest his

tremulous nerves should be, for a moment, discomposed. It is the interest of the rich (if they have acquired their riches fairly) that a reform should take place, and that it should come *speedily* too; for, if it should be delayed 'til imperious events produce it, it will, in all probability, be attended with numerous evils, the whole of which might now be avoided.

Amongst a great many admirable qualities possessed by the people of England, they have some of a different nature, one of which is that *credulity*, that facility to be deceived, which exposes them to the designs of craft and cunning. An instance of this, really disgraceful to human intellect, is, the greediness with which they have begun to swallow GEORGE ROSE's bait of *saving banks for the poor*, while he and his sons are actually receiving out of the public money more than would maintain all the poor of ten extensive parishes! By this trick he is working to gain popularity that may assist in propping up his declining influence. He knows very well that it is the burden of taxes that makes paupers; and while he is making paupers by the receipt of taxes, he is publishing a pamphlet to show how the poor may become rich by the saving of their own pennies. The impudence, the insolence, of these publications are only to be equalled by the stupid, the brutal credulity with which they have been received. But, the tricks now come too late. All the waxing of the poor and the terrifying of the rich will be of no avail. The glass of the system is nearly run out; and the numerous crowds of selfish cowards, who have lent their hands to prolong its existence lest their tranquillity should be disturbed, must make haste to get under ground, or they will have the mortification to hear the shouts of freemen succeed the silence of slaves.

I am your friend,

WM. COBBETT.

TO THE

PEOPLE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.

LETTER VI.

First heavy blow to the Pitt System—Squire Jolterhead and George Rose—Property Tax abandoned—Malt Tax—New language of the people—Prince Regent and condemned prisoners—Lady Wilson and his Royal Highness—Duke of Athol—Pitt's end—Bill relative to Napoleon—State of France.

Botley, 30th March, 1816.

In No. 8, which, I hope, is, by this time safely arrived at New-York, I told you, that it appeared to me, that the persons, who have *so much to do with seats in parliament*, were resolved to put an end to the *Property Tax*. This they have now done. On the 18th instant the Chancellor of the Exchequer brought forward a proposition for the continuation of it in part; and which part, if it had been continued, might soon have been augmented. The land owners seem to have, at last, made up their minds to make a stand against the further progress of the Pitt System. They seem to have perceived, at last, that, unless they began to resist now, the whole of their estates would pass away from them. 'Squire Jolterhead felt his pocket growing quite empty; and he resolved not to give up the last shilling. There were 201 Members for the Tax, and 238 against the Tax. If you now look back into the *American part* of No. 7, and which, for my health's sake, I did not publish *here*, you will see how well I guessed at what would take place. I beg you to bear in mind the *reasons* which I gave you for thinking that the Tax would be lost. Thus, you will see, that though you will not have the Register till about six weeks after the publication of the London part of it, you will really always be, with regard to true information, even in point of *time*, beforehand with the people here, so far, at least, as my means

of information go; because I dare to say to you what no one dares to say here.

I say, and so will you say, that it is hardly fair in 'Squire Jolterhead to refuse to give up his "last shilling," seeing that he so often pledged himself to give up, not only his last shilling, but the last drop of his blood also. But, he now pretends, that the pledge was only *figurative*; and he says, besides, that he understood, that *all others* were to do the same that he was to do. But that, at the end of this glorious work, he finds himself reduced to poverty, while others (and especially those who *backed him on*) are grown amazingly rich; that they, who had nothing at the outset of the war, are become rich as lords, while he, who was rich at the outset, is become a beggar, or, at least, is brought to the eve of beggary.

'Squire Jolterhead reasons thus with OLD GEORGE ROSE. "George," says he, "you told me in your pamphlet, which you published and republished, during the war, that it was necessary for me to part with part of my money in order to save the rest, and in order to prevent the French from making me an *Atheist*."

This was George's language. This was the way in which he urged the people on to pay taxes. I remember, that when I was in Philadelphia, I used to read George's pamphlet with delight; and there were a great many Americans who used to read it with delight also. We did not then know what was the manner in which George was paying salvage himself; and which manner I have pretty well explained, in this Number, in my second Letter to the people of Southampton, to which Letter I shall add some *Notes* for your information.

'Squire Jolterhead thinks it rather hard, that, while he has been paying salvage; that is to say, while his estate has been passing away from him, George should have been *gaining an estate*. It is not quite a new thing to see a great man's es-

tate become the property of his *steward*; and this is very much the case of old John Bull at this time. Whether any steps will be taken to put this matter to rights is more than I can say.

The debate upon the Property Tax was very important. Lord Castlereagh urged the House to agree to it. Without this tax, he said, "they would plunge the nation into all the dangers of an imperfect system of finance; that they would remain stationary in their debts; that the tax was not an expedient, but was absolutely necessary to the well-being of the state; and he *conjured* the House and '*solemnly intreated*' them not to refuse this only means of saving the country." It was all in vain. The utmost impatience was discovered, and the proposition was rejected as stated before. Nay, it was so evident to the Ministers, that the land owners were determined to make a stand in their own defence, that, the next night, the Chancellor of the Exchequer came down to the House and announced his intention to *abandon the War Tax on Malt*; that is, a tax of 2s. a bushel, which, incredible as it may appear to the rest of the world, has yielded upwards of 2 millions of pounds, or 8 millions of Dollars, *a year*. The whole of the Tax upon malt was 36s. a quarter (or 8 bushels); it will now be 20s. But, here are 16s. a quarter lopped off; and, if no tax be imposed in lieu of it, (and no tax can,) this is a real saving to me, for instance, of, at least, 32s. a month; or 20 pounds a year.

This is *doing something*; and, as my motto was, before the parliament met, "*something must be done*," events have already proved it true. Thus, then, the *System* has received a *blow*; a *body-blow*, which, as we, in England (amongst whom boxing is a real science) well know, is worth a score of black eyes and bloody noses. These are soon got over; but, a good body-blow, or, what is called a *doubler-up*, makes a man remember it for

a long while, and he must have much more *bottom* than I take Castlereagh to have, if it does not render him very shy for ever after, whenever he sees his antagonist's eye directed towards the vulnerable part. Thus it happened upon this occasion. The body-blow of the Property Tax night made Mr. Vansittart hasten to *give in* upon the subject of the Malt Tax, seeing that the land owners had their eye fixed on the old point again.

These, however, are but *beginnings*. There must be more and still heavier blows given to the system before this day twelve months. Loans have now been resolved on; but loans are a mere expedient to put off the evil hour. What must be the consequence of borrowing money to pay the interest of money already borrowed, all the world knows. Under such a system, *arising avowedly from a state of distress*, who can suppose, that the funds will, or can, long support any degree of credit? The distress has not arisen from any *temporary* cause. The cause, the inability to pay, has arisen from a cause that cannot be removed, without again making the exchange 30 per cent. against us all over the world. The distress is daily and hourly increasing; and, to suppose that the indirect taxes and assessed and stamp taxes will yield as much as they have yielded, is, it seems to me, little short of madness.

But, the lopping off of taxes will not stop here. The assessed taxes on farming horses is to be *reduced*; aye, and taken off, too. This will scarcely amount to less than a million of pounds; and thus will about 18 millions of direct taxes have been taken off; and if, after this, enough be collected to pay the interest of the Debt, and the demand of the Sinking Fund, I shall be very much surprised, unless the *guinea* and *bushel of wheat* rise in value. As Mr. JEFFERSON (I think it was) said of the American Constitution,

the Pitt System of Finance "is now in the *full tide of Experiment*."

A grand effort has been made on the part of the Ministers to persuade the nation, that the land owners have got rid of the Income Tax *for their own sakes*, and that they care not what load they leave upon *the people*. I exposed the fallacy of this in No. 9, of this volume; but, still the effort has been continued. It has, however, not been attended with success; and Castlereagh, with all his hardihood, has manifestly sunk under the weight of the popular voice, joined with that of the land owners. He was vastly bold and dashing at the outset; talked in the Pitt style; made long and rattling periods; affected to hold his opponents in contempt; and flung out a tirade now and then against *popular clamour* and *ignorance*. Faith! he has found, that John Bull, though he will bear a great deal when his belly is full, is not so very good-humoured when it is empty. When John is well off, he is insolent towards all the rest of the world; when he is pinched, he is ill-tempered at home. I must, nevertheless, do John the justice to say, that he has, upon this occasion, behaved well. I do not like to flatter him; and I bear him as much ill-will as I can muster up for his envious disposition towards foreign nations; for his deadly hatred of freedom upon the Continent; for his having approved of many deeds, which I dare not name; for his exultation at the fall of so many brave men in France; but, still I must say, that, in this season of distress he has behaved well. The forbearance of landlords and parsons towards the farmers; the general forbearance of all creditors; the voluntary assistance; the kindness of neighbours towards one another; the unshaken confidence which has been displayed between man and man: all these certainly do John Bull a great deal of honour, and show, that if he should happen to pick up a little sense during his calamities, he may

yet be fit for something better than merely working like a Jack-ass to earn money to pay German and Russian Troops to fight against the republicans of France.

The manner in which the Ministers have sneaked out of the War Malt-Tax is very curious, and clearly discovers their conviction that the landlords are not to be trifled with. They say, that, seeing that the rich had refused to pay the Income Tax, *they* thought it right, that this Malt Tax should be given up to the *poor*. The shallowness of all this set of notions has been shown a hundred times over. But, taking the Ministers upon their own ground, how has this been a boon to the *poor*? There is a tax upon *beer*, besides the tax upon Malt. But, this beer tax is only upon beer *sold in public houses by retail*, or sold by *brewers*, who sell it out of the barrel, &c. There is no tax upon beer brewed in private houses; and, as almost the whole of the *gentlemen* and *farmers* brew their own beer, the beer tax, according to the notion of the Ministers, and other shallow politicians, *falls exclusively upon the poor*. Therefore, to have given a boon to the *poor*, they should have abolished the *beer* tax, of which the gentlemen, according to their notion, pay no part. This only shows the miserable shifts they resort to in order to disguise their defeat, and the approaching dissolution of the system. The real fact is, they saw, that those who had refused the Income Tax would also refuse this tax; and, therefore, they made this miserable excuse for not bringing it forward.

Then, again, as to the loan to supply its place, they said, that since they *must have a loan*, they *might as well have a loan for two millions more as not*. Very true: they "might as well be *hanged* for a *sheep* as for a *lamb*." Verily, this was a most miserable quirk! One would have thought, that, having lost one tax, which they represented as absolutely necessary

to the safety of the country, they would, if possible, have given up no more. Two millions of money added to a *peace* loan is no trifle; and that they will find, when they come to make that loan. But, will the landlords and the people let them make loans? Oh, yes! as long as they please. They would let them borrow the whole, if they would; the whole 60 millions: all that is objected to is *taxation*; and this now will and must be diminished.

To you, in America, it may appear strange, that we should make such a fuss about the refusal of a tax, seeing that taxes are often proposed by your Secretary of the Treasury, and refused by the Congress, without any *anger* on either side, and without exciting any particular interest among the people. It is widely different here. Here it is a very cut-and-dry affair in general; and, until now, nobody has, for many years, ever expected to see a tax much opposed, much less did any one ever suppose that a tax would be finally *refused*.

This is, therefore, a *new era* in our affairs; and, as we always keep running on in any direction, when we are once set going, I am not without hopes, that the Minister will, before this session is over, find his taxing code very much simplified, and his army of tax-gatherers very much reduced. But, we are arrived at a new era in another respect. Those sentiments of justice and humanity, and that love of freedom, which have been smothered for so many years past by the outcry against Jacobins and Levellers, and by the dread of revolution and bloodshed, have never been wholly extinguished, and they now begin to be openly expressed. Several of the Petitions have expressed disapprobation of taxing the people of England for the purpose of restoring the Bourbons. In that of the town of Lymington, in Hampshire, were the following words: "Your petitioners were repeatedly assured by His Majesty's Ministers, that, on the termination of the War ending

“ with the Peace of Paris, the Property
 “ Tax should not be renewed; but, in
 “ spite of promises, so often made to the
 “ people, that vile and odious tax was
 “ again imposed on them, in their opi-
 “ nion, for the base purpose of re-esta-
 “ blishing a tyrant on the throne of France,
 “ in direct hostility to the wishes, so of-
 “ ten expressed, of the French nation.
 “ Your Petitioners cannot, therefore, view
 “ the projected renewal of the Property
 “ Tax but as a premium to be paid by this
 “ oppressed nation for the purpose of
 “ maintaining Louis XVIII., nicknamed
 “ the *desired*, on the throne of France, in
 “ opposition to the wishes of the French
 “ people, and by the aid of a foreign ar-
 “ my to be paid by this country.”

These sentiments are not new to the *minds* of hundreds of thousands of the people of England; but, the open expression of them by any body of men, is wholly new. This is, in my view of the matter, a great point gained; a great point for *France* as well as for England; for, it must be quite clear, that this nation being once sensible, being once thoroughly convinced, that its own misery has been produced by its intermeddling in the affairs of France, will not be easily prevailed upon to intermeddle a second time, if the French people should again rise to assert their rights. It is now fast becoming a general opinion, that the war ought never to have been begun by us against the French. The principles and objects of that war are now becoming clear to all men, in spite of a corrupt press. To *renew* delusion will, I hope, be impossible.

The truth is, that, as the fruit of English industry and the valour of Englishmen, (including, in this appellation, our brethren of Ireland and Scotland,) have been the principal cause of the final success of what has been insolently termed “ *legitimacy*,” and, which, in fact, is neither more nor less than the submission of nations to the absolute will of an hereditary master: the truth is, that if this de-

testable cause lose the support of England, (and how scandalous it is to think of its having her support!) that cause is wholly ruined; and the *legitimates* will soon find their situation much more perilous than ever.

If we look back at the history of the late wars, we see, that all the *legitimates* were subdued; that they were humbled in the dust; that they appeared to have no hope left; but, that the perseverance of this country alone, and the lavishing of her immense resources, *gained time* for all the humbled kings; and, in a lucky moment for them, (produced by the vanity and ambition of Napoleon,) poured forth the means of securing their restoration. The passions and prejudices of this people, worked upon by a crafty and corrupt press, were arrayed in favour of all that the cool sense of this same people would have held in abhorrence. These passions and prejudices have now, by the aid of that severe teacher, *misery*, been made to give way to the dictates of reason and justice; or, at least, these latter are fast returning to our minds. And, therefore, the *legitimates*, if they have any sense, will see that their only sound prop is actually slipping from beneath them.

This is a change singularly favourable to the cause of freedom all over the world, and affords much better ground for hope for the final success of that cause than any that has appeared for a quarter of a century. The ministers and their minions have taken infinite pains to keep up the *glory delusion*, and to make the country believe, that it is necessary to its safety, that it should *maintain a high station in Europe*. So it is; but, the question is, in *what way* we ought to do that. There is no fear but that we shall be at the *head* of every thing; and one of the *follies* of Napoleon, and of the republican rulers, was, to pretend that we were, and must be, “ *a second rate power*.” This talk, which arose from mere vanity, did much of the mischief. Those who made use of it knew

as little of the resources of England as they did of the English character. They appear to have had no idea, that there was not one single English Jacobin, who would not have sold his shirt off his back to purchase powder and ball, rather than have made a peace, in which it should have been allowed that England was second to any nation upon earth. Yes, it is very right that England should maintain a high station amongst nations. But, it is not right that she should be at the head of a league of *legitimates*. Her natural place is the head of the sons of freedom. She should stand high, but it is not in the estimation of Despots, Popes, Jesuits, and Dominican Monks, that she ought to stand high; it is not for her people to think it glory to have received a consecrated banner from His Holiness of Rome; it is not for them to wish to stand high with *Vendéans* and *Cossacks*. And, all this the people now begin pretty clearly to understand.

While this change has been taking place in the public mind, as to taxes, some very serious inquiries have been begun as to *salaries*, &c. Instead of *reducing* the pay of persons in public employ, their pay has, in many cases, been actually augmented; and instances have been brought forward in the Secretary to the Admiralty and the Commissaries of Excise. One CROKER, an Irish barrister, who laboured so hard in the case of the Duke of York, has a salary very nearly as large as that of your President; and each Commissioner of Excise has nearly as many pounds annually as Mr. Monroe or Mr. Dallas has dollars. The falling off in their rents has, however, made the law-makers look into these things; and, before the session is over, I expect to see the nails of the Ministers pretty closely pared.

After the war in the Reign of Queen Anne, a most vigilant search was made, at the Queen's request, after the money, which individuals had unjustly got from

the public during the war. Something of the same sort will, I hope, take place now. It may be a while before this will come; but, come it will, I have no doubt. This would not only be an act of moral justice, but would afford great relief to the country.

I have, in No. 8, given you an account of the *real state of the Prince Regent's health*, and, in No. 10, I have informed you about the prisoners in Newgate, condemned to death. It is curious that these matters should have been stated by me, and the statements actually on their way to America, before the subjects were mentioned in any public way here. Within a few days Mr. BENNET has made a motion in the House of Commons, for a return of all the prisoners in Newgate, waiting the decision of the Prince as to whether they are to live or die. It appears that there are 58 of them, and that some of them have been kept in this horrible state from December to this day. The Ministers said, at first, that the Prince, having a bad fit of *gout*, they advised him not to come to London from Brighton; and, that it was inconvenient to assemble the law officers at Brighton to advise him as to whom he ought to pardon. LORD MILTON having expressed his indignation at such an excuse, and another Member having shown that no officer except the Lord Chancellor was wanted on such occasions, besides the Recorder of London; and the thing having roused the public a great deal, the Ministers now say, that the Prince never heard of the state of the prisoners till he read an account of it in the debates! And, they say, that he is now better; that his *gout* is gone; that the feebleness in his feet, occasioned by the said *gout*, is nearly removed; and that he is going up to London forthwith. For more than three months we have been told (by the newspapers) that he was just about to remove; but now, I suppose, London will once more have the honour to possess him.

It was pity, that the Ministers should

have thought it advisable to keep the Recorder from his Royal Highness's presence on account of this *gout*. Many *Councils* have been held; the parliament has been opened by a commission signed by the Prince; the Marriage of his daughter has been settled, and a Message, signed by him, has been sent to Parliament on the subject. It is pity (don't you think it is?) that the poor wretches in Newgate should never have been mentioned to the Prince, and that he should first hear of their situation through the common newspapers!

A very curious incident has happened (if what the newspapers say be true) as to audiences given by the Prince. But, let me, while I think of it, state, that the corrupt part of the press has been almost daily telling the public of audiences given by the Prince, and of "*select parties*" at the Brighton Pavilion. What I am now about to state is, however, curious in the extreme. Sir ROBERT WILSON's Lady has come over from Paris to obtain an *audience* of the Prince in behalf of her husband. It was, some weeks ago, announced in the paper that her Ladyship was gone down to Brighton for the purpose; and, it has since been very ostentatiously stated, *that she has had an audience of the Royal Personage*. I suppose this fact may be true; but, I am very sure that the Ministerial newspapers state a falsehood, when they say that "Lady Wilson *saw* the Prince;" for thousands are able to swear, and I for one, that Lady Wilson, though a most beautiful and amiable woman, IS STONE BLIND!

Now, let it be observed, that Lady Wilson's business was to entreat in behalf of a *prisoner*. She went to the Prince to relieve the anxiety of herself, her husband, and her children. Far be it from me to insinuate, that it was not just and laudable to pay immediate attention to her; and I most sincerely hope, that the *legitimates* will not dare to touch a hair of the head of Sir Robert Wilson or of his gallant associates; but, it ought to be

borne in mind, that the unhappy men, in the condemned cells in Newgate, have fathers, and mothers, and wives, and children; and that these have their anxieties as well as other people. The mother of the Drum-boy, who was executed in 1812, actually dropped down dead when the fate of her son was announced to her. There are, probably, not less than 500 persons connected with the condemned prisoners. And, is it *nothing* to relieve 500 anxious minds and aching hearts?

What indignation has been felt for half a century at the answer given to those who were gasping for breath in the Black-Hole of Calcutta! "*The Commander was asleep, and no one dared awake him!*" The Prince had the *gout*, and the Ministers did not think it right to report to him, that many unhappy prisoners were waiting in anxious suspense to know his pleasure as to their life or death!

The County of *Perth* and several other parts of Scotland have petitioned for the Income Tax. As to *Perth*, at the head of which appears to have been the *Duke of Athol*, there is little matter of surprise. His Grace receives a large sum of money out of the taxes annually; and, he is too just and reasonable a man to expect the Ministers to pay him *out of their own pockets*. He is a considerate man, and knows, that for the government to pay a grant, the government must have money to pay with. So does George Rose; and, therefore, the conduct of both, upon this occasion, has been perfectly consistent; much more so than that of those persons who are for large establishments and high salaries to-day, and for low taxes to-morrow. But, as so many of the people of Scotland have petitioned for the Income Tax, it may not be amiss to see what proportion of it Scotland has been *paying*. For the last year,

England paid	£13,016,041
Scotland paid	1,255,924

Now, it is very certain, that Scotland is a very insignificant country, or, that it does not pay its due share of the taxes. When we consider, besides, the very large share of *places* and *pensions*, enjoyed by the Scots; when we consider, that, for many years, very large sums of money have been *paid* by England to make roads, bridges, and canals in Scotland, while such undertakings, in England, are carried on by *private means*, one wonders how John Bull can be such an egregious ass as to seem to acknowledge, that the people of Scotland are *more industrious than he is*, and even that their country is *a finer country*! To read the writings, published in that seat of all that is impudent, mean, corrupt, and persecuting, Edinburgh, one would imagine that there was neither morality, learning, courage, industry, nor wealth, in any other part of the kingdom than Scotland. It is a fact, and which I have before stated in detail, from official documents, that England, and Ireland too, have been, for many years, paying large sums in taxes to make canals, &c., *in order to prevent people from emigrating from Scotland*. These sums have been granted upon this very ground, *expressly stated* in the reports on which the grants have been founded. To say nothing, at present, of the *folly* of this, what do you Americans think of its justice? What should you think of granting the money of the *Union* to make canals in *Connecticut*, to find the people employment, and to prevent them from migrating to Indiana?

Under any circumstances, at all times and seasons, this partiality to Scotland is a subject of just complaint; but, the facts merit pointed notice, when we see a considerable part of that country petitioning for a tax, which has been so loudly condemned in England. I have often acknowledged the great merits of Scotchmen; but, I will never allow them to have *all* the merit that exists in the world; and, as to *politics*, they are, in general, worthy

of any thing but *imitation*. The truth is, that the people of Scotland are held in a state of vassalage unknown in England. The rod of authority reaches, in that country, to the very *schoolmasters*. "Education," indeed! God forbid that I should ever see the people of England enjoying the benefit of *such* education! An education that is very well calculated to make clever sycophants and excisemen; but which is good for nothing else. There are many sound and zealous politicians in Scotland; but, I have never met with one of them, who did not most bitterly complain of the general servility of his country.

I will now return to the *Duke of Athol*, and will speak of his affair with *perfect freedom*; but, I will not do it *on this side of the Atlantic*.

To return now to the real state of the case of the Duke of Athol; it is this. This nobleman had some antiquated claim to *sovereignty* over the *Isle of Man*. It had always been scouted by the Parliament, and even by the Ministry; but, in 1804 and 1805, when the discoveries were made with regard to old Lord Melville, (the notoriously infamous Dundas,) and when the votes for and against were nearly balanced, the Duke of Athol renewed his claim against the country for his pretended sovereignty; and, it was finally agreed by Pitt to urge forward his claim, if he and his Members in the Lower House (of which he had *two*) would vote for clearing the culprit Dundas, in whose fate that of the character of Pitt himself was, as it afterwards proved, involved. The bargain was completed on both sides; the Duke supported Dundas, and he got a *perpetual grant* of three thousand pounds a year. This was the season of the most barefaced corruption. 'Til now Pitt had always contrived to shove off from himself the charge of giving the public money in exchange for votes. But, when it was discovered, that he really had been *privy* to Dundas's gross peculations;

that he had made false loans, and given the profits of them to persons who had hired seats to procure him votes; when he stood thus blackened; when he stood convicted before the public as a peculator, and was compelled to resort to a *bill of indemnity*, which, in such a case, could be regarded in no other light than as a *pardon*; when he got into this state, he appears to have set shame at defiance; and, it was in this season of his abandonment of character, that he did what has always been called the “Athol job,” and which LORD ELLENBOROUGH (though not very backward at taking public money) described by comparing the Duke to a sailor, who, instead of assisting to get a ship off the rocks, sets to work to plunder the chests in the cabin.

Certainly, any thing more disgraceful has seldom been done. It was calculated, at the time, that to induce a majority to vote for it, cost 50,000*l.* It was a memorable transaction from being that, the effect of which Pitt never could get the better of. He was *Minister* 'til January, 1806, when he died; but, he was not that *Mr. Pitt* whose honesty and disinterestedness nobody had before ever called in question. People ceased to speak of him as they formerly had spoken. Members, who had, for years, looked up to him as a sort of superior being, now treated him as an equal; and, frequently, with something bordering on contempt. I remember Dr. LAWRENCE coming into my house (which was then near the Houses of Parliament) one night as he was going home. “Well!” exclaimed he, “miracles have not ceased, say what they will! Never did I expect to live to hear what I have heard this night!” Upon inquiry, I found, that SIR WILLIAM ELFORD had been *schooling Pitt*; had been “*advising*” him to be *more guarded* in his expressions.” “And what did Pitt say,” said I. “Oh!” replied the Doctor, “he said nothing, but he gave him a look that seemed to say, thou base and stupid reptile, is there no hell to shelter me

“from the shame of listening to thy advice!”

What a sort of man this SIR WILLIAM ELFORD was; what a base and contemptible tool he had been of Pitt, who made him a Baronet, the reader will guess, perhaps, from the following anecdote. In 1800, SIR FRANCIS BURDETT had brought before Parliament some charges of cruelty against one ARIS, who was the keeper of a *Bastile*, which the Ministry used during the suspension of the Habeas Corpus. ELFORD, in order, as he thought, to gratify Pitt, moved that the *Governor* (as he called ARIS) should come to the Bar of the House, and there *disprove* the assertions of Sir Francis. The latter instantly rose and *seconded* the motion, observing, that, hardened as ARIS was, there was something in guilt which could never look truth in the face. Pitt, who perceived that the officiousness of Elford would lead to the detection of the cruelties of the Privy Council and the Secretary of State, by enabling Sir Francis to question and cross question their jailer before the House, whispered LONG, one of the Secretaries of the Treasury, to get up and “*recommend* to his honourable friend, Elford, “to *withdraw* his motion,” which the latter instantly assented to. But, the consent of Sir Francis Burdett, as *seconder*, was to be obtained to this; and, Sir Francis refused to suffer the motion to be withdrawn. The Speaker was then obliged to put the question; the house divided; and Elford *actually voted against his own motion!*

Such was the contemptible wretch who afterwards took upon him to *school Mr. Pitt*! The latter appears to have felt this change proceeding from his loss of character; and, it is the best thing that can be said of him, that, in all probability, it tended to shorten his days. Such a man as Dundas, who was notoriously destitute of all principle; who had been a scrambling jobber all his life-time; who had never had any character to lose; such a man might be dismissed from the Privy

Council ; might be tried for peculation ; might be cleared by a *bare majority* of the House of Lords, and by the vote of such people as the Dukes of Athol and York ; might refuse to answer questions " lest the answer should criminate himself ;" such a man might *live* after all this, and even show himself in parliament, as Melville did. But, Mr. Pitt had had a *character* greater than that of almost any man that ever existed. There was a time when he was really *beloved* by all the sensible and worthy part of this nation. He remembered that time, and though the miscreants, who had dragged him, step by step, into all sorts of evil deeds, cared about nothing but place and pelf ; though they were quite as happy as ever in the possession of power in 1805, *he* felt how he had fallen ; he felt what it was to have exchanged the friendship, the sincere friendship of the independent gentlemen of England for that of such men as Jenkinson, Dundas, Rose, Castlereagh, Canning, Huskisson, and that set of prostituted lawyers, by whom he was, at last, surrounded, and, indeed, guided. He saw that ADDINGTON, a man who, bred to the bar, had never had a two-guinea fee in his life ; a man destitute of all talent except that of a sycophant ; a low-born, low-minded, low-mannered man ; a man whose emptiness, whose pompous inanity, were a standing jest ; a man so completely the creature of Pitt, that when SHERIDAN called him his *sitting part*, left behind him upon the Treasury Bench, every one acknowledged the aptness and the justice of the figure : Mr. Pitt saw, that even this man, this servile courtier, this contemptible hypocrite, had supplanted him in the esteem of great numbers of virtuous, though deceived people. It was impossible for him to bear his existence under such a change ; and, he certainly fell a victim to his mortification : an awful warning to every man of talent, into whose mind shall intrude the thought of gaining or retaining power by the means of corruption.

Much has been said and written on the comparative talents of Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox ; but, in truth, as to the talent of *oratory*, there is no comparison to be made between Mr. Pitt and *any* other man in England. He was a shallow politician ; his schemes of finance were hatched at the Bank, and were merely dressed out with his eloquence ; he understood very little of the causes of national happiness and misery, of national strength and national feebleness. But, as an orator, as a debater, he surpassed *all* other men so as to leave no room for comparison at all. No man can read a book with less hesitation and with more fluency than he spoke. He never referred to any notes or any paper. If he had to answer five or six persons, he missed not one single point in either of their speeches ; if there was a possibility of turning any argument of his opponents to his own advantage, he never missed to do it ; and, he discovered, at a single glance, and carried along in his memory, vulnerable points which common men would never have been able to perceive. In cases where he was attacked by undeniable and striking facts, he watched for the *wanderings* of his assailants, seized hold of some weak part of a digression, (even though but a parenthesis,) and, before he ended, his hearers nearly forgot the question at issue. So that the real power of his speeches, leaving the other motives of the hearers aside, was very great. And, then, the *correctness* with which he spoke ; the elegant language, and the *caution*. Mr. WYNDHAM said of him to me, that " it only belonged to Mr. Pitt to speak a " King's Speech off hand." He could unite the highest pitch of vehemence of language and manner with the utmost degree of correctness and caution.

It is impossible for any man of any country, not to lament that such intellectual powers should have been perverted ; and to Englishmen, who love their country, it is a subject of unparalleled sorrow as well as shame. In the year 1793, it was in Mr. Pitt's power to have secured

the liberty of all Europe. If he had boldly rejected the commands of the Borough-mongers to go to war; if he had resigned, and called upon the people to join him in demanding a reform in the House of Commons; if he had done this, there would have been a speedy end to all corruptions; there would have been no war against France; all the despotism of the Continent would have been dissolved; England would have remained free and happy; and he would have lived to the latest posterity in the hearts of a great and grateful nation, and have been held in admiration throughout the whole world. But, in evil hour, yielding to the advice and importunities of the dirty slaves by whom he was surrounded, he chose himself to act the part of a slave to the Borough-mongers. He said, in a Speech in Parliament, in 1780, that "without a reform in Parliament, it was impossible for any honest man to remain a Minister in England;" and he now, in his own person, gave a complete proof of the truth of this his former assertion. He not only set his face against reform; he not only plunged the nation into war to prevent reform; but he became a bitter persecutor of reformers, and, with his tool Sir John Scott, and urged on by the counsel of Burke, he actually endeavoured to pursue even to death, Mr. HORNE TOOKE, with whom he had formerly been associated to procure that very reform, the persevering in which cause alone was the offence of Mr. Tooke, as was declared by the Judge (Eyre) who presided at the trial; and on which trial, being summoned as a witness by Mr. Tooke, Mr. Pitt was guilty of what I cannot, as ascribed to such a man, find the heart to name.

The acts of injustice, oppression, and cruelty, which were perpetrated under him from 1793 to 1800, and the gross and outrageous acts of corruption in 1804 and 1805, though the nation, in the midst of false alarms and hostile passions, appeared not to heed them, did leave a deep impression upon the minds of the people

in general, and the exposures of the latter years completed the destruction of a character which, at one time, seemed to be a great national possession. Mr. PITT entered public life with all possible advantages. His father had left him a great stock of reputation; the father was still surpassed in talent by the son. All good men were prepared beforehand to love him. He came into power after a disastrous war. The great prosperity, which the industry and energy of the nation soon re-produced, was ascribed to him by the people in general. His youth, his person, his known disdain of dishonourable men at the outset; all were in his favour. There was hardly an independent gentleman in England, who, at one time, had not a sincere personal regard for him: and (Truth in tears records the fact) he died with *Jenkinson, Dundas, Castlereagh, and Canning* for friends, and with *George Rose* to close his eyes.

The digression, into which I have here been led, has robbed me of almost all my room, but it appeared to me necessary; for, really, the people in England, in general, have never known but little as to these important historical facts. A vile hireling, who has written what he calls *a life of Mr. Pitt*, never knew any thing about the matter, except what swam upon the surface; and, if he had, his business was to disguise the truth. George Rose's account of the close of Mr. Pitt's life was the subject of *ridicule*; when there was a time that Mr. Pitt's knell would have sunk the hearts in the bodies of ninety-nine hundredths of the people. Nobody has been so much deceived as to these matters as the people of America. They have read the productions of our corrupted press, without being upon the spot to see that they were false. I hope, however, in the space of a year, to be able to do much in favour of the cause of truth in your quarter of the world, not only with regard to the present, but also with regard to the past.

Before I conclude, I must notice what

has recently passed, relative to *Napoleon*. Castlereagh has brought in a *Bill* to authorize the Ministers to keep *Napoleon* in custody, and, so far from its having been opposed, Mr. BROUGHAM, who is the most sturdy barker, has expressed his approbation of *all that has been done*, with regard to *Napoleon*; and, as a *lawyer*, has said, that the law of nations warrants the keeping of him a prisoner for life. That this is *false* I need hardly say; and that it is *base* in the extreme will admit of no doubt. The doctrine is, that if a government decline to claim its people, who have been made prisoners of war by another power, that other power may detain them as prisoners for life. Now, what is understood by the parties when one makes another prisoner of war? Why, it is this: that the prisoner shall be effectually prevented from acting against the capturing party during that same war. If an exchange take place, the compact is, of course, at an end; and, in all cases, the compact must end with the war, unless the government of the captured party refuse to set free its prisoners of war, which has not been the case with regard to France. If this doctrine of Castlereagh were good, any other government, by *not claiming* any part of its soldiers or seamen, prisoners in a foreign state, might condemn them to perpetual imprisonment and banishment, than which what would be more unjust or more insulting to the common sense of mankind?

Besides, as to the present case, who does not perceive, that the *non-claimer* of the Bourbon government is a mere hypocritical pretence? Who does not see, that the Bourbons are mere tools in the hands of this government for the ruining of France? And, who does not see, moreover, that this government is keeping *Napoleon* in its hands, with a view of making use of him to keep the Bourbons in subjection?

The state of France is such that no man can tell, or even guess, with any de-

gree of accuracy, at what is likely to take place. All the gentlemen that I converse with, who have lately been in that country, represent the priests as being hard at work to recover some degree of power and some part of their former property; the old Noblesse as endeavouring to get back their estates; and the Bourbons and English government as favouring the efforts of both. Great discontents prevail; great contempt of the Bourbons; great hatred of the English; but nothing like energy on the part of the people. Indeed, the only persons, who appear to have any spirit in the country, are the *English soldiers*, whom Wellington is continually flogging for their "*sedition* language." The Bourbons, who are execrated everywhere, are nowhere so loudly execrated as in the English army; and, it is quite curious that the same sentiment is becoming prevalent in England itself. The truth is that there is something so detestably base in the whole affair of the Bourbon restoration; something at which the nature of man so strongly revolts; that it is impossible that it should be tolerated for any length of time by any body, and especially by men, who, as Englishmen have, have been taught to regard justice and freedom as *something*. The troops that return from France (officers as well as soldiers) express their contempt of the French for suffering the Bourbons to remain! They are astonished that a people can dance and sing under such a load of degradation. And really this is a truly painful reflection, and ought to be a warning to all the teachers of excessive *delicacy* and *refinement*, which, I am afraid, are in no little vogue in America. I have seen Magazines and other publications from America, which I should have supposed to have been written by sickly ladies rather than by vigorous-minded men. I perceive a puling, whining hankering after a reputation for excellence in "*the fine arts*," and laboured attempts to prove that England owes many of her

best *painters* to America. Alas! this is not what America ought to boast of. She ought to be proud, as she justly may, of her excellence in framing laws; of her wonderful progress in turning a wilderness into a country covered with the habitations of freemen; of the valour of her seamen and soldiers; of her generally enlightened state; of the almost total absence of beggary and pauperism in her immense territory. And, as to *talent*, if you will but give us the reputation of your diplomatic Ministers and of your Members of Congress; if you will but give us Mr. Ingersol's speech on the battle of New-Orleans, and of the Answers of Pennsylvania and New-York to the Circular of the Hartford Convention, I will, for my part, freely give you back all your *painters* and all your *pictures*.

It was a lamentable symptom to behold

the French people making ten times as much outcry about the stripping of the Louvre and the Museums as they did about the pillaging of their provinces and the cession of their barrier towns. A great attachment to what are called "the *fine arts*" appears to be incompatible with the enjoyment of freedom. When men can prefer the strokes of the pencil to the grand scenes which nature presents; when they can think that the mere jingle of words is of any importance when compared with all-subduing reason; when unintelligible sounds can withdraw them from the pursuits of sense and knowledge; when this once comes to be the taste of any considerable part of a people, a high opinion of the value of freedom cannot long exist.

WM. COBBETT.

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